
23d NOVEMBER, 1804.

Read the first and second time, and ordered to be committed to a Committee of the whole House on Monday next.

29th NOVEMBER, 1804.

Amended and ordered to be re-committed to a Committee of the whole House to-morrow.

A B I L L,

To regulate the Clearance of Armed Merchant Vessels.

1 **Be it enacted**, by the Senate and House of Representatives
2 of the United States of America, in Congress assembled, That
3 after due notice of this act at the several custom houses, no mer-
4 chant vessel armed or provided with the means of being armed at sea,
5 shall receive a clearance, or be permitted to leave the port where
6 she may be so armed or provided, without bond, with two sufficient
7 sureties being given by the owner or owners, or by the master or
8 commander, to the use of the United States, in a sum equal to
9 double the value of said vessel, conditioned that such vessel shall
10 not make or commit any depredation, outrage, unlawful assault, or

11 violence, nor make any other unlawful use of her arms against
 12 the vessels, citizens, subjects, or territory of any nation in amity
 13 with the United States; *Provided*, That the regulations herein
 14 contained shall not be construed to extend to vessels bound to
 15 any port or place in the Mediterranean, or beyond the cape of
 16 Good Hope.

1 SEC. 2. *And be it further enacted*, That if any armed merchant
 2 vessel clearing for any port or place within the Mediterranean or
 3 beyond the cape of Good Hope, shall make or commit any depreda-
 4 tion, outrage, unlawful assault, or violence as aforesaid, on her
 5 voyage to or from any place to which she may be bound or else-
 6 where, or shall wilfully proceed to any port or place in the
 7 West Indies, such vessel with her arms, tackle, and furniture, or
 8 the value thereof, shall be forfeited to the use of the United
 9 States.

1 SEC. 3. *And be it further enacted*, That on satisfactory evidence
 2 or information being given to the collector of any port, that any ves-
 3 sel within the same is armed or arming, or provided with the means
 4 of being armed at sea, for the purpose of committing any unlawful
 5 act as herein before expressed, or of carrying on by force of arms,
 6 any unlawful commerce, it shall be the duty of such collector to
 7 detain such vessel until the case be submitted to the President of
 8 the United States, who is hereby authorised to cause such vessel
 9 to be disarmed, or to order a clearance to be granted, as he shall
 10 judge proper.

1 SEC. 4. *And be it further enacted,* That if any armed vessel as
2 aforesaid, shall proceed to sea without a clearance, or shall leave
3 the port, where her detention or disarming shall be required,
4 contrary to the provision of this act, such vessel with her arms,
5 furniture, and tackle, or the value thereof, shall be forfeited to the
6 use of the United States.